

# Michigan Health Purchasers Coalition

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**The Coalition comprises associations, consumer groups, corporations, and unions involved in the provision of health care benefit coverage for millions of Michigan residents.**

The Coalition works on health legislation to promote more cost-effective health plan options.

## OPPOSITION TO STATE-REQUIRED HEALTH INSURANCE PAYMENTS

Employers (independently or through collective bargaining), individuals, associations, and religious and fraternal groups, should have the freedom to select the benefits, providers, and payment and utilization review arrangements which they determine as best meeting their needs for quality, accessible and cost-effective health care.

## Membership List

*List of signators updated as of January, 2009*

*These are the groups that subscribed to the basic policy statement when the Coalition was formally established in October 1993, or that joined later. Coalition statements on specific bills or proposals are separately circulated for support among Coalition members and other interested groups.*

### Associations

Alliance for Health  
Alliance for Retired Americans, MI  
American Society of Employers  
Detroit Regional Chamber  
Economic Alliance for Michigan  
Grand Rapids Area Chamber of Commerce  
Greater Detroit Area Health Council  
Michigan Chamber of Commerce  
Michigan Manufacturers Association  
Michigan Health Purchasers Alliance  
Small Business Association of Michigan  
Southwest Michigan Health Care Coalition

### Companies

Aztec Manufacturing  
Chrysler  
Delphi Corporation  
F.D. Stella Products Company  
Federal Mogul  
Ford Motor Company  
General Motors Corporation  
ITH Staffing Solutions  
JSJ Corporation  
Kellogg Company  
Kushner & Company  
Lear Corporation  
Online Technologies Corp.  
Visteon Corporation  
Willett Communications

### Employee Groups & Unions

AFL-CIO Employer Purchasing Coalition  
AFT-Michigan  
International Association of Machinists, District 60  
International Association of Machinists, District 97  
International Union, UAW  
Michigan Corrections Organization  
Michigan Education Association (MEA)  
Michigan Office of the State Employer  
Michigan Public School Employees Retirement System  
Michigan State AFL-CIO  
Michigan State Building Trades Council  
Michigan State Pipetrades Council  
Michigan State Utility Workers Council  
Service Employees International Union, (SEIU)  
Michigan State Council  
State Employees Retirees' Association (SERA)  
Teamsters Michigan Joint Council #43  
United Food & Commercial Workers, Local 876  
United Food & Commercial Workers, Local 951  
United Steelworkers, District 2  
Utility Workers, Local 223

### Insurance Payers

Aetna  
Blue Cross Blue Shield of Michigan  
Michigan Education Special Services  
Association (MESSA)



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## Basic Policy Statement

***Membership is open to all health care coverage purchaser groups (associations, businesses, consumer groups, or insurance companies), which subscribe to the founding statement when the Coalition was formed in October 1993.***

**We have joined together to express appreciation for the new legislative focus on health issues, but also to voice great concern about simultaneous efforts that will worsen matters.**

**Two key and interrelated problems threaten the overall health care system:**

- escalating health costs, **jeopardizing employers' economic viability, workers' job opportunities, and governmental fiscal solvency; and**
- growing numbers of citizens with inadequate health coverage or none at all, **causing financial and health crises for millions of individuals, expanded cost shifting to health purchasers, and increased financial stress for government and health providers.**

**Fortunately, elected officials, in both parties and at the State and Federal levels, are focusing on these problems in ways that would continue quality health care.**

Our immediate concerns are prompted by various bills to restrict the ability of purchasers (whether employers, associations, unions or individuals) to select the types of health coverage that they determine best meet their needs. **State government has an important responsibility, through licensure and regulation, to assure minimum guarantees of safety and effectiveness of health providers and insurance products. State regulation should not be used, however, to favor certain health services or providers, nor dictate to whom and how purchasers must pay for services.**

We oppose bills to require payments for a few favored health services or professions, regardless of purchaser preference. **(Required insurance offerings can be considered when there is a clear and compelling public need.)** State law does not require insurance payment for hospitals or physicians (MDs and DOs), but does impose coverage for certain other provider groups and services in differing ways for commercial insurers, the Blues, and HMOs.

We oppose all such requirements – current, expanded or new. **Contrary to many advocates' expectations, these State requirements impact less than half of Michiganians. The rest are exempt due to coverage by self-insured larger private employers and public programs (e.g., Medicaid and Medicare). These requirements would add costs for those not exempt, including smaller businesses and state and local government employers, further increasing the problem of the insured or underinsured.**

- 1. We oppose bills to force purchasers to contract with providers not of their choice. Such bills would require uniform contracts or payments for all providers of covered services just because they are State-licensed. Purchasers, acting directly or via intermediaries, should continue to be able to limit covered providers according to the number and/or criteria they determine best meet their needs for affordable and quality health services.**
- 2. We oppose blocking the ability of purchasers and payers to rely on utilization review for assuring appropriateness of health care charges and services. National utilization review standards (cooperatively developed among purchaser, provider and insurance groups) are being implemented to assure review is done in a reasonable, timely and responsive manner.**

**We urge those promoting restrictions on purchasers to instead use their energies to demonstrate the merits of their proposals to those who are to pay for them, instead of lobbying for State coercion of their desired customers.**

**Purchasers oppose these bills as inconsistent with reforms needed to eliminate inappropriate and unneeded health care, too often over-priced. Business and labor also oppose these requirements because they often increase costs and interfere with purchasers' rights to make their own judgments. Unions additionally oppose these requirements as unwarranted interference with the State-assured right to collectively bargain for those benefits that their members determine as having the highest priority.**

We ask legislators' help in opposing such bills that would harm purchase attempts to effectively pursue more cost-effective and quality health care services.